

ABSTRACT

Media data is distributed across multiple devices, and the media data is sent therefrom by multiple senders under the control of multiple schedulers. For media data blocks in a look-ahead region, schedulers transmit look ahead requests to senders in order to reserve upcoming media data blocks. In a described implementation, a look ahead request identifies a media data block. The receiving sender increments a block usage counter corresponding to the identified media data block responsive to the look ahead request. As part of a look ahead operation, if the media data block is not already in RAM, the sender preloads the media data block into RAM. While the block usage counter indicates that the corresponding media data block is locked, the sender maintains the media data block in RAM. A look ahead cancel message transmitted from the scheduler to the sender prompts the sender to decrement the block usage counter.